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ABSTRACT

The most significant role played by the federal government in advancing the state of sex equity in educational administration, as well as in most other issues involving social change, has been through legislation. This paper describes a few of the more significant federally funded initiatives related to increasing sex equity (with particular attention to those aimed at improving the status of women aspiring to or currently in educational administration); analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of these efforts; and analyzes the paradigm shifts that should occur in current thinking about the issue of underrepresentation of women in education administration. Women seeking administrative careers in education should remember that the following attributes are important: (1) education in the appropriate field; (2) meaningful experience; (3) record of improving and updating professional qualifications; (4) ongoing networking; and (5) strategic and long-range planning. The paper also offers seven recommendations for making federally funded programs and services more effective for today's women. Paradigm shifts move from the current trend of focusing on women's skills that will enable them to perform above and beyond their job descriptions and capabilities toward a focus on training administrators with the power to recruit, hire, mentor, retrain, and promote women in leadership positions. (Contains 10 references.) (LMI)

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AN ANALYSES OF FEDERAL INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT WOMEN'S UPWARD MOBILITY IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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A paper for a symposium presentation titled "Closing the Gender Gap in Educational Leadership: A Medley of Support Systems that Work" at the AERA Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois, on March 25, 1997

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INTRODUCTION

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational programs or activity receiving federal financial assistance.
-From the preamble to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

The most significant role played by the federal government in advancing the state of sex equity in educational administration, as well as in most other issues involving social change, has been through legislation. "Old habits and time-honored gender roles," write Gupton and Slick (1996), "are nebulous and stubbornly resistant to change throughout a society. The two alternative approaches to . . . discrimination [are] using mandates or changing societal attitudes" (p.145). These authors make the point that discrimination of women in the workplace will continue to need legislative backing until there is concrete evidence supported by hard data and women's experiences to prove sex equity in the world of work has indeed been achieved to a level no longer justifying legislative overseeing. Unfortunately, this seems to be how many societal prejudices and biases are overcome and ultimately (over much time) widely changed. And so, the federal level's role in addressing issues of discrimination is a critical one in facilitating societal change. "Political pressures and laws and regulations have been, and continue to be, a potent force in removing barriers in both society and education systems" writes Adams (1982) quoted in Flansburg and Hanson (1993). For a succinct outline of U.S. legislation aimed at equity (and thus, women seeking careers in educational leadership), refer to Appendix A of this paper.

As a result of these varied pieces of legislation (e.g., Title IX, Equal Pay Act, Women's Educational Equity Act) related to equity issues in schools and in the workplace, federal funding has been made available for nearly three decades to states, various agencies, colleges/universities, and interest groups to provide skill development, professional enhancement, and other training opportunities for women. In the field of education, many of these activities have been designed to raise the level of women's participation in the decision-making process in the field of education and, more importantly, to increase the number of women administrators at the local, state and national levels.

This paper seeks to inform the reader by (1) describing a few of the more significant federally funded initiatives related to increasing sex equity (with particular attention to those aimed at improving the status of women aspiring to or currently in educational administration), (2) analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of these efforts, and (3) by concluding with the authors' up-to-date analysis of the paradigm shifts that should occur in the current thinking about the issue of underrepresentation of women in educational administration; key suggestions for women seeking administrative careers in education; recommendations for making federally funded programs and services geared toward achieving gender equity more effective for *today's* women; and the authors' concluding thoughts about this topic. Ultimately, this paper reinforces the paradigm shifts in thinking about women in education that should undergird future research and guide reflection, discussion, policy-making, and practice. These shifts move from the current trend of *focusing on women's skills that will enable them to perform above and beyond their job descriptions and capabilities* toward *training administrators with the power to recruit, hire, mentor, retain and promote*

women in leadership positions. While it is important to continue enriching women's experiences and upgrading their skills, these activities (by themselves) have not resulted in fully opening and/or significantly expanding the opportunities for women in the workplace, and this includes women in leadership roles in education.

Federally-funded Initiatives Advancing Women in Educational Administration

Southeastern Desegregation Assistance Center

One of the federally-funded, non-profit organizations charged with the responsibility of providing professional development for women educators in order to enhance their visibility and increase their numbers in educational leadership is the Southeastern Desegregation Assistance Center (SEDAC). Known for its work in desegregation and equity across race, national origin and sex/gender, one of SEDAC's goals is to provide technical assistance and training which will improve the overall status of women in educational leadership and administration in the States of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. This section of the paper looks at a random sampling of conferences, institutes and training agendas that SEDAC has co-sponsored, supported financially, and/or endorsed for nearly three decades. To assess the effect of SEDAC activities, a number of women who have participated in SEDAC activities on sex/gender issues in general, and women in administration events in particular, were interviewed regarding their perceptions, professional and personal development.

It is strongly suggested here that there is a need to establish collaborative working

relationships and/or viable partnerships between those who are now in key administrative positions and (potential) women leaders. The challenge is to develop meaningful alternatives which will maximize the use of women's talents and skills, respect and acknowledge their ability to contribute in the decision-making process, and be accorded equal status in educational leadership.

The Southeastern Desegregation Assistance Center was among the first organizations in the United States to receive federal support to carry out the civil rights mandates regarding desegregation and equity across race, national origin, sex/gender and different abilities. There are ten Desegregation Assistance Centers in the country, however, SEDAC's work in the "deep soúth" is complicated by the region's history of segregation that has resulted in the persistence of racism and sexism in both rural and urban communities.

Over the span of nearly 30 years, SEDAC has received approximately $800,000 per year or $24 million in federal funds. An important part of the grant's initiative is that, in addition to dealing with desegregation, race and national origin issues, SEDAC will also deliver technical assistance to state and local education agencies to improve the quality of education for female students and the participation of women in education administration. To this end, records show that SEDAC has provided support (only upon request of organizations, colleges or universities, state and local education agencies) in the following ways:

1. By becoming members of and/or subscribing to women's professional organizations and interest groups including: American Association of University Women (AAUW), National Organization for Women (NOW), National Coalition for Sex Equity in Education (NCSEE) and Women's Sports Society.

2. By co-sponsoring conferences, institutes and training programs which address issues pertaining to women in administration and Title IX (educational equity for women in sports, math, science and other traditionally male-oriented fields).

3. By providing financial assistance to individuals, organizations and educational institutions in order to meet specific expenses for seminars, workshops, conferences, meetings and other events (e.g., honorariums for speakers, registration and expenses of participants, cost of meeting rooms, and so on).

4. By working closely with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the Department of Justice on current policies and mandates regarding women's rights, sexual harassment, affirmative action and equal employment opportunity.

The description above gives a misleading picture of the actual SEDAC support, performance and commitment to women's issues. For instance, memberships to organizations and interest groups have not translated into meaningful SEDAC participation in and/or lending a voice for women's causes. In co-sponsored events, SEDAC's involvement "behind the scenes" have been limited to giving financial support for specific activities. On questions regarding legal matters (e.g., sexual harassment, hiring/firing policies, grievance process), SEDAC usually refers inquirers to OCR, private civil rights lawyers, consultants, state and/or local education agencies. Moreover, throughout its history, SEDAC has never hired a part or full-time staff dedicated to addressing women's issues (in July 1996, under a new administration, the Center's Assistant Director also bears the responsibility of "Gender Equity

Coordinator").[1]

When compared with other SEDAC activities, SEDAC's overall involvement in the area of "women in administration" may be best described as *insignificant* when considering the amount of time, resources and actual dollars expended on girls/women's issues. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that in SEDAC's constituency, the southeastern states, there has been very little progress (if any) for women administrators in terms of qualitative and quantitative placements in educational leadership.

For instance, the State of Mississippi named two women superintendents for two local school districts more than ten years ago. In 1997, the same women have held the same positions -- no other woman has been hired for superintendency.

A former middle school principal (African-American woman who now directs a cultural diversity program) commented:

> You will find more women hired as principals in elementary schools. If we are in high school settings, women are more likely to be found in smaller or less prestigious schools. From what I can see, men tend to get assigned to the best schools with the most resources and community support. I might add that the men in these positions also tend to be white. This is why I gave up being a principal. I felt that I was on a dead-end job. No matter how I try and apply, I will never move up to a bigger and better school.

A woman who was recently appointed as an assistant principal in a high school magnet academy summarized her feelings in the following way:

> I was very happy when I received this appointment. But that wore off very quickly. Ever since I became an AP, I feel like a doormat -- I welcome parents and other people who are visiting the school and I get to show them around. I was given a walkie-talkie to monitor the hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms, and

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[1] SEDAC has given high priority to the organization's goals regarding desegregation and race (black and white). It has included national origin and other minority issues among its priorities only in recent years.

school grounds. This is not the job that I applied and interviewed for. As a single mother, I need this job. As a well-educated person, my mind is in a wasteland.

An in-depth analysis of training agendas designed to broaden women's skills, talents and marketability indicates that:

1) While participants generally express satisfaction on the timeliness and types of training they have received, there are no indicators on how such training will affect short and/or long-term job retention and upward mobility.

2) Training topics tend to raise the level of women's performance, efficiency and management of their everyday lives (e.g., time and stress management, improving women's health, networking, dealing with discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace, variety of "how to's"). Although the topics seem to raise women's self-esteem and competency in their current positions, there are no indicators of how participants could move effectively in higher level positions or gain acknowledgment and respect in their respective workplaces.

3) Conferences, institutes and training sessions tend to showcase women and men who have already reached or are reaching positions of leadership, expertise and prominence in their respective fields. Even though participants gain a better perspective on "who's who," "who's where," and/or "who's involved with what," such events rarely (if ever) provide direct linkages between participants and the educational experts/leaders that would lead to, i.e., mentor-apprentice relations.

4) Federal funds are granted based on proposer's goals and objectives. In the case of Desegregation Assistance Centers, performance monitoring and accountability have been lax particularly on women's issues. For example, the January 1997 meetings of

the ten regional DACs reveal that directors have placed sex/gender as very low in their priorities by not including women's equity issues in any part of their agenda (race, national origin and physical abilities were the prevailing equity issues).

Attendance records in SEDAC's co-sponsored activities indicate that the southeastern states have an abundance of highly qualified, skilled and capable women with strong leadership potential. The thousands that have attended local, state and national professional development institutes have included mid-level administrators, college instructors, principals, assistant principals, master/lead teachers, consultants, directors and coordinators of educational programs. They come from different racial and cultural backgrounds -- Asian/Pacific Islanders, Blacks/African-Americans, European Americans/Caucasians, Hispanics/Latinas, Native Americans, and those from mixed heritage. It seems that the underrepresentation of women and minority groups in educational leadership can be explained by other factors, not from lack of available, talented women.

A regular participant in SEDAC's co-sponsored annual event for women educators, an administrator from Dade County Public Schools shared the following opinion:

> In every conference, you hear speakers and workshop presenters talk about the "glass ceiling" for women in management positions. What are they talking about? Many of us are outside the so-called "glass" and far from worrying about the so-called "ceiling." I feel that I am being constantly by-passed by people with little or no experience -- younger men and women from different backgrounds have been hired for the positions that I applied for. Right now, I am training my new boss how our office operates and I'm supervising our office staff until he gets familiar with each person's responsibilities.

These comments denote several levels of concern which include racism, sexism and ageism. That is, in spite of qualifications, experience and loyalty to the organization, other

considerations seem to weigh heavily in the process of hiring and/or promoting women.

The prevailing agendas of SEDAC's co-sponsored activities tend to reflect the idea of conferencing and training "for the women, by the women." For instance, event committees and subcommittees are almost always led by and composed of (predominantly) women. Male membership is usually reserved for "male-feminists", those who are user-friendly to women's causes, and/or donors of monetary and/or in-kind contributions on the movement for equity/ equality issues. However, it seems that women dominated committees and subcommittees responsible for launching and maintaining professional development activities have had very little impact, if any, on the recruitment, selection, retention and promotion of women in administration.

Another trend which needs scrutiny is the *overdevelopment* of women above and beyond their already high credentials. Prevailing agendas seem to emphasize the need for women to develop further skills to cope with stress resulting from (greater) demands on their intellectual, mental and physical abilities. For instance, sociological studies show that in spite of modern technology (e.g., office computers, interoffice communication systems, vacuum cleaners, microwave ovens, washers and dryers), the amount of time and energy required to do women's work has not diminished significantly. If anything, modern machines and technology have created a false perception that women today have more leisure and easier time when compared with their pre-modern era counterparts. It would seem that time and stress management training would do little to improve women's skills unless more time (beyond 24 hours a day) is provided to perform their work and home-related expectations.

The observation of a literacy program director exemplifies the points mentioned above:

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> School district restructuring forced a reduction in the number of office personnel. But the work that needed to be done was not decreased at all. Instead, the work was redistributed to tho different departments which now have lesser number of employees. Most of us (women) began to share clerical and support staff. I noticed that most men in our building retained their secretaries and other folks. So, even though the responsibilities look like they had been redistributed evenly to key people, women administrators did not have the extra help that men were provided. To get things done, I have had to work late and, in most cases, take work home on weekends.

Separate interviews of three women who have succeeded in acquiring leadership positions in their local school districts in Florida, Georgia and Kentucky indicated that they did not know about federally funded opportunities for women's professional development. The Georgian remarked:

> You could say that I am "homegrown." My parents lived here all their lives, I grew up here and everybody knows my family. I went to college on scholarship and that was the only time I left home. I came back after college and began teaching. Years later, I decided to go for my master's degree and I am now working oh my doctorate. It may be true that it is "who you know" that counts. Sometimes I wonder if I would have had the same opportunity in cities or towns where I am a stranger.

The administrator from Florida had a different experience. She earned her bachelor's degree in Puerto Rico and taught there for a few years. She married and joined her husband in New York City. The couple moved to Florida in order to find what they deemed desirable educational opportunities for their two small children. She related that:

> Good timing, good luck and my Spanish-speaking ability must have worked for me when I looked for a job. I started substitute teaching and doing volunteer work at my children's school so I can be near them. Everybody got to know me -- the superintendent, the principal, the children, all the teachers and staff. The number of Spanish-speaking families was increasing at that time and I volunteered to translate for parents and their children. When I got a job offer to work for a private company, I announced the possibility of ending my volunteer work. At the urging of the school principal who vouched for my abilities, a job was created for me at the school district. Since then, I have worked hard and moved to bigger and better positions.

The Kentucky educator was proud of her growth from a classroom teacher to a school

district administrator. Throughout her graduate school years, her professor guided her career growth and opened the doors for job possibilities. She noted:

> I was working full-time as a teacher while going to graduate school part-time. Even though there were many times when I wanted to give up working on my master's degree, I had a wonderful relationship with all my professors. One of my them became my lifetime mentor. She gave me pep-talks and was patient in listening to my ideas and interpretation of what I was learning. This is not to say that she was easy on me. On the contrary, she demanded the best out of me and I, in turn, made sure that I met her expectations.....Even now, with a fax or phone call, she would readily write a letter of recommendation on my behalf. This was an ideal mentor-apprentice relationship.

The above examples suggest that there are various settings and alternatives which can be developed and explored to raise women's status in educational leadership. There is common element which seems to have contributed to the three women's path to success: *familiarity* with the people who had the authority to hire them. Such familiarity has raised the level of confidence that the decision to hire the women is a good one -- that, in addition to meeting the basic qualifications for specific positions, the women have a well-grounded history of "desirable" personal character which complement the organization's goals.

The Women's Educational Equity Act - Equity Resource Center

The Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) passed in 1974 was designed to take proactive steps toward making education more equitable for girls and women by providing incentives and guidance to schools and community groups. The WEEA Program operating under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Education, funds projects aimed at developing model educational programs, training, materials, and research to promote educational equity and transform educational systems. WEEA projects must have national, statewide, or general

significance and address all levels of education. WEEA grant recipients may provide direct services to a target group or may develop educational materials that are disseminated through the WEEA Equity Resource Center.

In addition to numerous grants, the WEEA Program established two support mechanisms: (1) the National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs and (2) the WEEA Publishing Center, now titled the Equity Resource Center. The National Advisory Council was established by Congress to inform the secretary of education about educational equity issues, make recommendations related to WEEA's operation, and to assess WEEA's funded projects. The council was dissolved by Congress in 1988 because of increasing pressure from women's groups who felt that the council as formed by then President Reagan was having a counter-productive effect on gender-equity issues.

The second WEEA mechanism (still operative) is the WEEA Equity Resource Center. The Center, located at Education Development Center, Inc. and under the direction of Katherine Hanson, was established to support the work of WEEA-funded projects. In FY 1997 with a budget of $2,000,000,000 the Women's Education Equity program awarded the following grantees:

Montclair State University Upper Montclair, NJ	$72,566
Yakima Valley Community College Yakima, WA	$61,678
School District of Palm Beach West Palm Beach, FL	$205,560
South Dakota Dept. of Labor Pierre, SD	$163,746

Board of Education of Prince George's County $199,275
Upper Marlboro, MD

Massachusetts Pre-Engineering Program, Inc. $181,515
Boston, MA

Source: Melissa Oppenheimer with the U.S. Dept. of Education - Office of the Under Secretary, Budget Service (See Appendix C for WEEA's funding history from 1976 to 1997)

According to a report on Title IX and WEEA, the Center "...provides assistance to grantees in developing products and in publishing and disseminating those products. In this way, work is shared nationally, and internationally, and allows others to learn from and build on the efforts taking place in local schools and communities. The publishing center maintains a national network of organizations and individuals working in sex and race equity, and works to keep equity issues visible within education discussions, as well as to link individual projects with national educational equity work" (Flansburg & Hanson, 1993, p.5).

In 1992 the Center expanded its networking capacity with the addition of electronic networking. Through its initial link with EquityNet, the Center now shares resources and information with over 4,000 social service organizations and individuals who subscribe to EquityNet which has greatly increased gender equity awareness and access to WEEA resources in a market that had heretofore been difficult to reach (Oppenheimer, 1997).

The Center also moderates EDEQUITY (Educational Equity Discussion List), a theory and practice discussion list that focuses on educational equity and serves as a forum for over 500 subscribers who discuss how to attain equity, improving education for all. [To subscribe, send the message *subscribe edequity* (without a "subject" line) to MAJORDOMO@CONFER.EDC.ORG]

Word is WEEA's newsletter (formerly titled *Digest)* and is distributed free to those interested in gender equity and multicultural education. The August (1990) issue of the newsletter is devoted entirely to women in school administration and the barriers to their advancement. This issue includes valuable information on resources and publications available to women seeking administrative positions in education (See Appendix B).

Women's Bureau - U.S. Department of Labor

The Women's Bureau was created by Congress on June 5, 1920, and given this mission: *to formulate standards and policies which shall promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment.* Most of the Bureau's work over the past seventy years has focused on entry level issues pertaining to women's access to non-traditional jobs and training outside the professions. In the 1980's the Bureau began to advocate more forcefully policies and practices to help make work and family needs more compatible - an issue that women administrators cite often as a complex problem and barrier to their advancement into higher levels of administration in the profession. For the 1990's, as women in educational administration and other fields of work continue to enter the workforce at ever-increasing rates, the Bureau continues to emphasize the need for helping people resolve conflicts in balancing work and family responsibilities.

From its position in the Office of the Secretary of Labor, the Bureau participates in departmental policy making and program planning, and serves as a coordinating body in the Department of Labor for programs affecting women. The Bureau has ten regional offices

headed by regional administrators whose work is to implement national programs and policies, develop local initiatives to address local needs and disseminate information and publications that support fair treatment of women in the workplace. In addition, the Bureau initiates and supports research pertaining to women in the work force, tests innovative ideas and approaches through demonstration projects that help prepare women to enter or reenter the work force, move into new areas of work, or move up on their careers. It carries out an information and education program through publications, audiovisuals, media relations, feature articles, and public speaking (The Women's Bureau: Milestones, 1990).

Valuable statistics and information on the history and current status of women and work in the U.S. can be obtained from the Women's Bureau (i.e., the completion of four major studies of women and work funded by the Bureau and released in February of 1992). One of these studies, "Breaking the Glass Ceiling in the 1990's" by Terry Scandura of the University of Miami, investigated the career experiences of top level female executives to identify obstacles to women's career advancement to top-level positions. Important findings related to women pursuing educational administrative careers of Scandura's study include (1) the path to the top for women is through *line authority*; (2) positive perceptions of career mobility potential were more prevalent for males than for females; (3) having a mentor appears to be an important characteristic of the career of women to make it to the top of their organizations; (4) having a mentor was positively and significantly associated with higher salary levels and better self-concepts; (5) a significant lack of family-supportive policies existed, or if they did, they were rarely implemented; (6) women with dependent children under age 18 living at home had lowered career promotion expectations, increased job stress,

more intent to leave the organization, and less mentoring than women without dependents (U.S. Dept. of Labor, Scandura, 1992).

A particularly helpful publication issued by the Women's Bureau is the 1993 *Handbook on Women Workers: Trends and Issues*. In the introduction, the Bureau explains that "(T)his handbook is more issue-oriented than previous handbooks published by the Women's Bureau; thus, it attempts to create a better understanding of some of the forces that influence women's participation or nonparticipation in the work force and that affect their general economic well-being" (p.xiii). Chapter 12 of the handbook is titled "Legal Rights of Women Workers" and includes a detailed account of recent legal developments and federal government initiatives affecting women in the workplace. A section of this chapter describes the work of the Department of Labor in dealing with the proverbial "glass ceiling" that is particularly pertinent to women educators in advancing their administrative careers. The authors admit that "...partially because of the difficulty in evaluating top executive-level recruitment and promotion patterns, corporate mid- and upper-level management has rarely been routinely included in compliance reviews performed by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. As a result," they conclude, "corporate employment practices with regard to executive opportunities for women and minority employees have not received the attention that the opportunities for lower level employees have received" (p. 218).

The Glass Ceiling Commission - Office of the Secretary of Labor

Chapter 12 of *The Handbook on Women Workers* also includes the findings of a

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yearlong study of the "glass ceiling" titled "A Report on the Glass Ceiling Initiative." Partly as a result of this study that documented substantial barriers to women's advancement up the corporate ladder past the middle-management level, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 mandated the establishment of a Glass Ceiling Commission housed in the office of the Secretary of Labor. This Commission composed of 21 members is charged with conducting a study of opportunities for and artificial barriers to the advancement of women and minorities to management and decision-making positions in business. This chapter also describes the status of women in state and local government positions where they state that "(A) glass ceiling in government limits the participation of women at the highest levels of the policy-making process. Few women hold high-level political appointments to cabinet positions. In addition, the majority of women in government, especially women of color, still face barriers that restrict their opportunity to advance beyond the lowest level jobs" (pp. 221-222).

This Glass Ceiling Commission obviously funds numerous studies, some of which were reviewed by the authors of this paper. One of these reports confirms the existence of sex discrimination in the workplace by concluding the following in its executive summary:

> * Race/ethnic and gender employment segregation is widespread in the U.S. economy. The allocation of many women of all ethnic background and minority men to lower quality jobs than they can perform directly creates gender and race/ethnic earnings inequalities.
>
> * Both racial and gender occupational segregation and earnings inequalities have been reduced since the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, but reductions in inequalities are uneven, reversible, and incomplete.

The summary draws many conclusions and includes a number of helpful recommendations pertaining to hiring and promotion, job stereotyping, public and private policy initiatives, and research initiatives. In a special section on "glass ceilings" the authors conclude that the segregated job structures for women and minorities prevent them from ever competing for top managerial and professional positions in large corporations and government agencies. "The higher one rises in a managerial or professional hierarchy the more likely future promotions are based on trust, social similarity and access to the informal networks of power and influence in the organization. Women and minorities are particularly disadvantaged on these dimensions in many workplaces," they contend and go on to say that the job of integrating lower levels of management is far easier than cracking glass ceilings (U.S. Dept. of Labor: Report by Thomaskovic-Devey).

Still another example of the work of the Glass Ceiling Commission is a report entitled "Managing Diversity and Glass Ceiling Initiatives as National Economic Imperatives" written by Cox and Smolinski (1994). These authors attest to the dilemmas often caused by the workforce composition unique to the United States: a workforce that is among the most gender and racioethnically diverse in the world. "One of the most critical challenges posed by diversity in the workplace is to eliminate barriers to entry and success in middle and senior manager jobs which may be related to group identity factors such as gender and race (i.e., break the "glass ceiling").

Reports such as these give needed reinforcement, increased visibility, and helpful recommendations to issues of discrimination that must continue at the national level in order for equity to be achieved throughout the country.

National Center for Education Statistics - Office of Educational Research and Improvement

The center is described as "...the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to education in the United States and other nations. . . . NCES activities are designed to address high priority education data needs; provide consistent, reliable, complete, and accurate indicators of education status and trends; and report timely, useful, and high quality data to the U.S. Department of Education, the Congress, the states, other education policymakers, practitioners, data users, and the general public" (U.S. Dept. of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Kopka and Korb, 1993, p. ii).

One of this center's publications relevant to women in education is *Women: Education and Outcomes released* in September of 1996 (See Appendix E). Included among its 99 pages of tables, charts, and graphs depicting statistical information on the trends of all descriptions in the participation by women in higher education and in the labor market in the U.S., is information on the doctoral degrees in education conferred by institutions of higher education by sex, 1970 to 1993. The data reveal that in 1970-71 twenty-one percent of the doctoral degrees in education were earned by women while they earned fifty-nine percent of the doctoral degrees in education in 1992-93. Charts depicting the ratios of men to women teachers at the university level as well and the ratios of men to women K-12 teachers dramatically portray the dominance of male professors in higher education and female teachers in K-12 schools (pp. 58-59). Not listed in the Table of Contents, but buried in an Appendix of Additional Tables there is even a table depicting the distribution of male and female principals, with the information broken down by grade levels indicating the dominance of male principals in middle and upper schools, and the concentration of female principals at

the elementary levels (pp. 83-84). What is missing, however, is also noteworthy: no mention is made of the numbers of male superintendents to female superintendents, the top-level executive position in public school education. Certainly, it seems not only reasonable, but also desirable for a book published by the National Center for Education Statistics that is expressly focusing on women in education to include vital statistics regarding how many women are advancing to the office of chief administrator of schools in this country. Where else should this information be collected if not by the country's officially designated and publicly funded Office of Educational Research and Improvement? Research on this topic is too often impeded by the scarcity of readily available, complete data regarding gender and administrative positions in education. See Appendix E for more information on the National Center for Education Statistics.

Paradigm Shifts About the Underrepresentation of Women in Educational Leadership

From the perspective of shifting our paradigms, there is a need to examine what has worked well for women who have attained success in obtaining high-level administrative positions (with or without participation in federally-funded professional development for women). In their recent book, *Highly Successful Women Administrators: The Inside Stories of How They Got There (1996),* Gupton and Slick report the results of their national study to determine what women in positions of power in education did to achieve their career goals. In chapter nine of their book, the authors describe the evolution of issues pertaining to women's underrepresentation in leadership positions in education (as well as other fields). The change

in many of the causes for women's underrepresentation in educational administration have created new areas of concern which, in many instances, replace or need to be added to current thinking about the issue. These changes, they suggest, have created the need for rethinking (or shifting our paradigms) about where the attention and work need to be focused in order to help women advance in the field in an equitable fashion to their male counterparts. These shifts are revisited, expanded, and reinforced in this paper based not only on Gupton's cited work but also on the experiences and research of this paper's co-author, Assistant Director of SEDAC, Rose Marie del Rosario:

1. The need to shift from focusing most of the attention on women's lack of aspirations for administrative careers to their need for better support systems. As both Gupton and del Rosario

have observed from their research and work with women educators, for the most part, women aspiring to positions of educational leadership have good skills and the proper credentials to be successful in administration. What they most need is assistance in sharing the responsibilities of work and home and supportive work environments that recognize and nurture their potentials for success as leaders.

2. The need to shift from women's lack of necessary qualifications (they now make up almost 60% of the persons receiving doctor's of administration degrees in education) to a greater scrutiny of the kinds of training and education they are experiencing. This shift speaks to del Rosario's concern that most of SEDAC's activities are conducted "for the women, by the

women" without important involvement of make colleagues who need to be included if significant change in the hiring, assigning of duties, mentoring, and promotion of women in the workplace is likely to occur since these functions are primarily dominated by white males.

3. The need to continue but to expand entry level equity concerns to include on-the-job and retention problems of women who acquire administrative positions. A positive step taken by the OFCCP is the inclusion in their compliance handbook for businesses and corporations of a chapter added only recently addressing the glass ceiling phenomenon experienced by many middle-management women. This chapter includes several new areas to which organizations must be sensitive if they are to perform equitable personnel practices (e.g., Identifying High Potential Employees - does the company have any mechanism for identifying persons with high potential for advancement? What is the race and gender composition for these people so identified? Relocation and Overseas Assignments - are relocation and overseas assignments important to advancement? Are there safeguards to ensure that prejudgment on willingness to move does not bias job offers involving relocation? and Cash Bonuses, Stock, and Stock Options - at what level are employees eligible for cash bonuses, stock grants, and stock options? Among those eligible, what standard is used to determine whether a person receives cash bonuses or stock?)

4. The ultimate shift, of course, is from *access to equity* wherein societal attitudes and thus practices related to gender and minority equity are changed to the extent that true equity is genuinely sought and achieved, not just token pieces of it attended superficially and

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sporadically to meet legal compliance or to satisfy the latest federal mandate.

Suggestions For Women Aspiring To Administrative Careers

What seems poignantly clear is that:

1. **Education in the appropriate field is the first and foremost consideration.** Human resource personnel look at the level of education as a primary criteria for hire. It is important to have a bachelor's, master's and/or doctoral degree from accredited schools in the United States.[2] The degree must be in line with the required position. (In recent years, hirers have found the value of considering people from "related fields" when educational background is combined with experiences in, e.g., teaching in the classroom, education administration, work with children and youth-related programs, and so on.)

2. **Meaningful experience counts.** Quality of experience is analyzed according to the position applied for. According to a personnel administrator in Dade County, Florida, it is <u>not</u> necessary for "experience" to be derived from a *paid position*. Rather, the experience must be related to the desired job and should demonstrate capabilities and personal traits which degrees, by themselves, could not provide. Experience cover a wide range of talents, skills and abilities that tend to enrich one's educational background and the "capacity to lead" in educational leadership. In most instances, experience is earned over a period of

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[2]Unless the applicant has provided evidence of "equivalency" to U.S. earned degrees, education obtained from foreign countries are usually considered insufficient to meet required qualifications. Equivalency may include formal statement(s) from accredited U.S. colleges/ universities and/or coursework at a local institution of higher education to meet internship, certification or other requirements.

time. For example, the first few lines of a typical job announcement for a program director state the minimum requirement as , i.e., "a master's degree in education, child psychology, counseling or related field and five years' experience working with at-risk youth. " In spite of the relatively broad description of requirements, focus of the initial sorting of applicants is based upon the basic description; in other words, those without a master's degree and five years' experience need not apply.[3]

3. **Record of improving and updating professional qualifications is important.** Changes in technology (i.e., modern machines, access to and use of computers and hard/ software), transitions in the course of human affairs (i.e., demographic character of urban and rural communities, attitudes toward people from different backgrounds, increased awareness of environmental and global concerns), and socio-political forces governing the workplace and local/national priorities in education present challenges which leaders must contend with in the process of day to day administration. In keeping with the trend of "preparing for leadership in the 21st century and beyond," women who aspire to be a part of today's and tomorrow's administration must be well equipped to deal with the transformations affecting the educational environment. For instance, children/students are now exposed and have access to sophisticated methods of modern communications such as e-mail, internet and worldwide web. On the other hand, there is a noticeable rise in the number of students who are non-English speakers (both from the American ethnic enclaves and immigrants from third

[3]Human resource personnel are quick to add that the definition of "meaningful or related experience" is flexible and negotiable depending upon the scope of the position, individuals or members of the group responsible for reviewing applications, letters of recommendations, references.

world or developing countries) with a broad range of intellectual and linguistic proficiencies -- some are fully prepared to meet the challenges of a global community, but most are in need of special assistance to keep up with the academic level of (same age or cohort) mainstream American society.

More and more, those aspiring to become education administrators must gain new knowledge, skills and proficiencies that are appropriate in today's world. Participation in professional development opportunities is critical. And, women should consider investing and re-vesting in themselves to stay competitive in the current and future job market.

4. **Networking should be an ongoing personal and professional pursuit.** "Who you know" remains an important element in lateral and upward mobility. While it is important to generate and maintain linkages with one's peers, those who aspire to achieve higher positions must develop networks beyond "like me" professionals (i.e., those in higher positions and includes people from disciplines different from one's own area of expertise). This means that there is a need to create opportunities and professional settings where meaningful and lasting personal connections can be initiated between (potential) mentors and apprentices or mentees, as well as between employers (persons with the authority to hire) and women aspirants.

The idea here is to generate a friendly environment where, through *authentic* networking, women are able to demonstrate talents and skills in the course of dialogue and social interaction. Over time, the *authenticity* of the socialization process between, i.e., mentors and mentees, establishes *familiarity* -- an element which tends to validate women's "worthiness" for valued positions.

5. **Strategic and long-range planning should guide the direction of one's career.** When compared with male counterparts, women seem more likely to zigzag through a career path. In a brief interview of five women aspirants for high level administrative positions, all experienced deviations from their original tracks due to marriage, children, family priorities, lack of geographic mobility, and other reasons. The *interruptions* have served as barriers to women's aspirations, although such interruptions have very little, if any, significant impact in men's career path plans or upward mobility. The need to shift paradigm challenges women to determine the importance of career objectives in relation to other priorities. Self-determination (along with personal virtues and social values which support one's ambition) and a well-planned strategy can be used to direct and guide one's road to attaining the desired position, in spite of expected and perceived interruptions along the way.

Supportive Action Needed At The Federal Level

1. To a lesser degree, maintain current professional development opportunities for women.
2. Promote greater collaboration among organizations and agencies that are vested in the status of women in general, women in educational leadership and administration in particular.
3. Engage employers, particularly those with the authority to create jobs and hire people, in developing and nurturing opportunities for women to advance.
4. Take immediate action through established offices such as the Women's Bureau, OERI, and especially the National Center for Education Statistics, to collect,

disseminate, and make readily available, more detailed information and statistics related to the numbers of men compared to women in positions of educational administration at the state and local levels of government.

5. Continue to fund federal initiatives such as WEEA, the Desegregation Assistance Centers, the "set-aside" funding component (repealed in the summer of 1995) for sex equity programs under the provisions of the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, and other federally funded state-level personnel and projects related to sex equity issues. Do a better job of targeting, coordinating and making known the existence of these services to women educators, school systems, and universities.

6. Require better accountability of federally funded initiatives. Evaluate and collect pertinent data to demonstrate and document the effectiveness of initiatives in promoting women's career advancement.

7. Be the foremost example. Use government as the model of fair practices and treatment of employees for the ultimate good of all - the employees, the organization and the nation.

Conclusion

In spite of the seemingly broad implications of federal initiatives for women, little is known about the actual impact of such initiatives on the state of women's participation in educational leadership. While there seems to be an increase in the number of women holding key administrative positions (e.g., principals, assistant principals, superintendents, and so on) in many school districts, there are questions about the "qualitative" and "quantitative" factors in regard to such placements. For instance, how do such positions compare with men's

placements in similar positions in terms of salary, fringe benefits, school image, prestige, geographic location, students/ faculty's demographic profile, community support and chances for upward mobility? And, within school districts, state and national levels, which leadership positions are more likely to be assigned to women than men? A good way to investigate the issue of parity is by asking the right - although oftentimes hard - questions . . . then having the courage and commitment to make needed changes for the ultimate good of all.

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Appendix A

SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION IMPACTING EQUITY

1920 The **Nineteenth Amendment** was passed which gave women the right to vote.

1960 **Commission on the Status of Women** established.

1963 **Executive Order 10980** prohibited discrimination in hiring and promotion of women within the federal bureaucracy.

1963 **Equal Pay Act** passed, which required equal pay for equal work; if the requirements of the job and working conditions are equal, the salaries must be equal regardless of sex.

1964 **Civil Rights Act** passed. Employment discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, and national origin is prohibited in organizations employing 15 or more persons, public and private employment agencies, labor unions, and labor management apprenticeship programs. Areas covered include hiring, job classification, promotion, compensation, fringe benefits, and firing. Discrimination based on pregnancy is prohibited by 1978 amendment to Title VII.

1972 **Title I of the Educational Amendments** passed which prohibits gender discrimination in all educational agencies and institutions receiving federal funds.

1972 **Title IX Educational Amendments** passed which prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions receiving federal financial assistance.

Title IV - Provides funds for regional assistance centers (Desegregation Assistance Centers, or DACS) that furnish technical assistance and materials to schools wishing to provide more equitable education to students. It also gives grants to states to do similar work.

1974 **Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA)** passed which provided funds to develop educational equity materials and programs to help support Title IX mandates.

1976 **Vocational Education Amendments** passed which required a full-time employee to work to eliminate sex bias and discrimination in vocational education programs. $50,000 was designated to this new position and states without this position would not receive their Federal monies.

1984 ***Grove City College v Bell* Supreme Court case** settled which ruled that only the programs receiving federal funds had to adhere to Title IX regulations

1984 **Carl D. Perkins Vocational Act** passed which strengthened the equity provisions. Specific dollars were set aside to provide programs for eliminating sex stereotyping and bias and to assist single parents and displaced homemakers gain marketable skills.

1988 **Civil Rights Restoration Act** passed which overturned the *Grove City* decision and made **all programs** suject to regulations of Title IX, not just those getting federal funds.

1990 **Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act** passed which further strengthened the administrative function of the equity position and continued specific dollar setasides including the $60,000 for the office of sex equity.

1990 **Americans with Disabilities Act** passed which extends civil rights protection to all disabled. It guarantees equal opportunity to disabled in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, including schools, and telecommunications.

1992 ***Franklin v North Gwinnett County Schools* Supreme Court case** settled. This allowed those claiming sex discrimination under Title I to sue for punitive and compensatory damages in court action.

1992 **Higher Education Act Amendments** passed which broadens eligibility for financial aid to single parents and displaced homemakers who are on other public assistance programs.

1992 **Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) Act** passed which requires that JTPA programs work with the state equity administrator to increase women's access to nontraditional job training.

EQUITY PROVISIONS OF THE CARL D. PERKINS VOCATIONAL AND APPLIED TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION ACT OF 1990

403.13 Part B (b)(1) Any state desiring to participate in the programs authorized by this Act shall assign one individual within the appropriate agency established or designated by the State board under the last sentence of subsection (a)(1) to administer vocational education programs within the State, to work full-time to assist the State board to fulfill the purposes of this Act by-

(A) administering the program of vocational education for single parents and homemakers described in section 221 and the sex equity program described in section 222;

(B) gathering, analyzing and disseminating data on the adequacy and effectiveness of vocational education programs in the State in meeting the education and employment needs of women(including preparation for employment in technical occupation, new and emerging occupational fields, and occupations regarded as nontraditional for women), and on the status of men and women students and employees in such programs;

(C) reviewing and commenting upon, and making recommendations concerning, the plans of local educational agencies, area vocational education schools, intermediate educational agencies, and postsecondary educational institutions to ensure that the needs of women and men for training in nontraditional jobs are met;

(D) reviewing vocational education programs (including career guidance and counseling) for sex stereotyping and sex bias, with particular attention to practices which tend to inhibit the entry of women in high technology occupations, and submitting (i)recommendations for inclusion in the State plan of programs and policies to overcome sex bias and sex stereotyping in such programs, and (ii) an assessment of the State's progress in meeting the purposes of this Act with regard to overcoming sex discrimination and sex stereotyping;

(E) reviewing proposed actions on grants, contracts, and the policies of the State board to ensure that the needs of women are addressed in the administration of this Act;

(F) developing recommendations for programs of information and outreach to women, concerning vocational education and employment opportunities for women(including opportunities for careers as technicians and skilled workers in technical fields and new and emerging occupational fields);

(G) providing technical assistance and advice to local educational agencies, postsecondary institutions, and other interested parties in the State, in expanding vocational opportunities for women;

(H) assisting administrators, instructors, and counselors in implementing programs and activities to increase access for women (including displaced homemakers and single heads of households) to vocational education and to increase male and female students' enrollment in nontraditional programs;

(I) developing an annual plan for the use of all funds available for such programs;

(J) managing the distribution of funds pursuant to section 223;

(K) monitoring the use of funds distributed to recipients under such programs; and

(L) evaluating the effectiveness of programs and activities supported by such funds.

(2) For the purpose of this subsection, the term "State" means any one of the fifty States and the District of Columbia.